
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENCE ARTS AND COMMERCE

INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCIES ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN UZBEK WRITING SKILLS IN SOUTH KOREAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

Competence in Uzbek composition writing skills is particularly important in determining students' performance in Uzbek because this will enable the students to improve in their Uzbek composition paper and consequently do well in the overall Uzbek examination in the University examination. Students also use Uzbek writing skills to answer questions in the other Uzbek papers of the University examination. That means writing skills also determine how well the students will perform in all the Uzbek papers. In order to acquire the writing skills in Uzbek, students need to be facilitated by their teachers since writing is only acquired by being taught. In view of the performance in Uzbek in the University examination and given the important role of the teachers in teaching writing skills, this paper therefore intends to investigate how teachers' pedagogical competencies influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills. The teachers' pedagogical competencies which the paper focuses on are; teachers' planning to teach, teaching methods, learning resources, classroom management, and designing of assessment techniques to evaluate learners' performance in Uzbek composition writing skills. The paper seeks to establish whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in planning for teaching influences students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korean universities. In addition, the paper attempts to determine whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in teaching methods influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korean Universities. The other area of concern is to establish whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in classroom management styles influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korean universities. Finally, it seeks to determine whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in design and assessment techniques influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korean universities.

Key Terms: Assessment, Classroom management, Language teaching, Pedagogical competencies, Second language, Writing skills.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Language is an important component of human development and it is the main medium of communication and interaction between human beings which is used to transmit culture from one generation to another. It is used to communicate human thoughts and feelings through a system of arbitrary symbols and signals such as sounds, words and gestures. As children develop from infancy to adulthood they are expected to acquire various language milestones in their first language which climax at adult-like or native-like language competence.

Language can be acquired as a first language, also referred to by Mitchell et al (2004) as mother tongue or native language, or it can also be acquired as a second language. The acquisition of first language is normally through the natural process of socialization within the family by adult beings. Second language is defined by Rod (1997) as any language that is learned subsequent to the mother tongue or the learning of a third or fourth language through contact or in a classroom through instruction. Mitchell and Myles (2004) concur with Rod and also state that; such second languages can be of wide communication within the local region, (like Korean in Korea) or they can be foreign languages (like Uzbek and other foreign languages in Korea). Uzbek in Korea, for most people is a second or even a third language because most educated Koreans are bilingual, since they speak their ethnic languages, and English.

Most linguists are of the view that second language learning is an extra ordinary complex phenomenon (Carol, 1995; Mitchell & Myles 2004) which a large number of people never acquire to a high level of competence. Because of these differences in acquiring first and second language, there is much greater extent of institutionalization of second language acquisition than first language. Second language acquisition in this case, is essentially related to the conscious language teaching and learning, which takes place in the classroom, with a general aim of developing communicative competence; or acquiring native-like speaker competence. This is the ability to use language correctly and appropriately to accomplish communication goals.

In teaching and learning second language, in the early stages, instructors may need to focus more on oral communication which refers to listening and speaking skills. Competence in these skills lays the foundation for the acquisition of reading and writing skills. Whereas listening and reading are receptive skills speaking and writing are productive skills which have to be taught. Instructors, especially in second language, can only help the students to speak fluently when they model appropriate listening strategies. As for the writing skill, in a second language situation, writing skills are the most difficult to master. The role of the teacher in teaching writing in second language is therefore very significant.

In supporting the importance of a teacher, Brumfit (1989), states that one major relevant factor to second language teaching is the teacher's variables such as aptitude, attitude, motivation, age, previous experience and training. Gorman (1991) also recognizes the role of the teachers as that of a key position in the classroom instruction in their students' second language learning. That means the teachers' pedagogical competencies in second language teaching are significant for their students' success.

According to Stern (1996), teachers' pedagogical competencies in second language teaching can be analyzed in terms of various variables involved in the pedagogical process. He distinguishes four main categories of variables of teacher competence; presage, context, process and product. Presage variables are the characteristics which teachers as individuals or as a group bring to their teaching. The context consists of the conditions within which the teacher operates – the community, the school environment and the students themselves, which determine the way the teacher will manage the teaching learning environment. The process is what teachers and learners do in the classroom. These are the learning activities which are determined by the teaching methods used by the teacher. The product variable refers to the outcome of the teaching learning process- the actual language proficiency attained by learners as indicated by learners' performance.

Another definition of pedagogical competence is by Suciú and Mata (2011) who consider the resources used by an individual teacher in the educational process as pedagogical competence. Furthermore, they emphasize that understanding pedagogical competence is the ability to solve pedagogical problems and tasks occurring in situations of real pedagogical activities; that is the ability to manage the learning environment. They also state that teachers' pedagogical competencies consist of three major aspects of planning, teaching and assessing.

Use of appropriate pedagogical competencies to teach Uzbek is very important because of the significant role Uzbek plays as a second language, not only in Korea but also in most Central Asian Countries, where it serves an important function of a unifying factor within these countries and among different countries of this region of Asia and the world at large.

Good performance in Uzbek at this level is also significant for the students because it provides a springboard for further learning of the language at higher levels of education and for selection into other courses which offer job placement.

Given the significant role of Uzbek, it is expected that the teachers of this second language will aim at developing adequate competence in their students so that they can perform well in the subject.

Various studies which have been done on the importance of the teacher have confirmed that the teacher is very significant in determining student's performance in a particular subject as well as the general academic achievement, Kuenzi (2008), Furguson and Gilpin (2001). In supporting the importance of a teacher in teaching second language, (Brumfit 1989, Gorman 1991, Stern 1996 & Suciú and Mata 2011), emphasize that the teacher's pedagogical competencies are a major factor in second language teaching. They also define pedagogical competencies as constituting various variables that are involved in the pedagogical process and are used to solve pedagogical problems. These scholars and researchers also

agree that it is only teachers who have the appropriate pedagogical competencies who can be able to assist their students to perform well.

2.1 Teachers' pedagogical competencies in teaching writing skills

According to Stern (1983) the language teaching /learning model identifies two principal players – the language teacher and the language learner. The teacher's role in second language learning is crucial in facilitating learning. According to Yalden (1987) the teacher's role in 2nd language teaching like Uzbek, is to foster communication. In order to do this the second language teachers, according to Shulman (2012) need to have both pedagogical and content knowledge. Pedagogical knowledge means the “how” of teaching which is generally acquired through education course and personal experience. Content knowledge on the other hand is the “what” of teaching.

In an exploratory study into the distinctive characteristics of language teachers especially teachers of English as a foreign language, Borg (2006) states that the teacher should have adequate knowledge of the 2nd language by being able to speak and write the language with a high level of proficiency. He/she should be able to explain how the 2nd language functions in terms of grammar and vocabulary to naive learners in a way that is both logical and informative. He/she should strive to master the 2nd language by realizing that learning a language is a lifelong task and therefore should endeavour to learn new vocabulary and expressions as they arise in the target language. Teachers also need to have pedagogical knowledge which they will need to apply in their classroom teaching. This is knowing how to create an environment that is conducive to learning. It also means sharing information and experience with others by taking part in activities outside his or her classroom, such as attending workshops, seminars or conferences so that he /she can develop professionally. In fact to be a professional it requires that the teacher should keep up-to date by reading about recent pedagogical developments. The teacher should have knowledge of different language teaching methods and how these methods have developed historically. Knowledge of these methods and others will enable the teacher to choose the appropriate methods.

The following Uzbek composition example enumerates my point.

Hayotimdagi eng katta xato

Mening hayotimni hatto “hayot” deb atash ham ozgina erish tuyuladi. Chunki endigina faqat 22ga kirdim! Lekin shu 22 yillik hayotimdagi eng katta xatoni tanlash kerak bo`lsa, men uni tanlay olaman.

Koreyada hamma 19 yoshlik talabalar universitetga kirish uchun imtihon topshirishlari kerak. Shuning uchun litsey paytida 3yil davomida hamma juda astoydil o`qiydi. Lekin, men emas. Men, afsuski, shunday qilmadim..

O`sha paytda “mening 19 yoshim hech qachon tugamasa kerak” deb o`ylar edim. “Ertaga ham, indinga ham 19 yosh bo`laman” deb o`ylab, o`tgan kunlarimning qanchalik qadriligini tushunmadim. Shunchaki yashayverdim. Shuning uchun o`qishimga ham, oilamga ham, do`stlarimga ham hech qanday

foyda keltirmadim. Chunki “hali vaqtim ko`p” deb o`ylar edim. Lekin hozir ko`p narsaga kech bo`ldi.. Men hatto o`tgan befoyda vaqtim uchun ota-onamdan uzr ham so`ray olmayman. O`sha paytda mening loqaydligim tufayli yo`qotgan dugonam bilan ham uchrashishim amri mahol.

Men shuni angladimki, mening eng katta xatom vaqtida hech narsani astoydil qilmaganimda ekan. Hamma narsani chin ko`ngildan va astoydil qilish kerak ekan..Keyinchalik hech narsadan afsuslanmaslik uchun!

Biggest mistake in my life

It seems strange for me even to call my life “life”. Because I am only 22. However if I need to chose my biggest mistake during my 22 tears life, I can do it.

All Korean young people when they are 19 they should ttake exam for University. So all high school students try to study very hard. But not me. I didn’t do like them.

At that time I thought that my 19 years never will end. And tomorrow, the day after tomorrow I will be at 19. And I didn’t understand how much important each my day. I just live. And so I didn’t do any benefits for my study, my family, my friends. Because I thought that I have a lot of time to do that in future... But now it is late for many things.. Even I can not apologize my parents for my time, I spent useless. And It is very difficult to meet my friend whom I lost because my indifference.

I understood, that my biggest mistake is that I didn’t do any things with my heart. I realized that we have to do everything earnestly... For not regret in future!

From the above translation, the learner appears to be highly skilled in creativity. My translation may not capture succinctly the inner emotions of the student. The similarities and difference between Korean and Uzbek remain an endless source of fascination.

In my eight years of living in Korea, I have found that it is a country of very lively spontaneity. Both Uzbekistan and Korea speak languages that are not closely related which makes learning foreign languages a difficult task. When looking at the student’s composition, the teacher needs to consider evaluating word order and also look at grammatical similarities.

But from the translation, a further deduction can be observed. Ideas and information of the student flow in and out throughout the composition. From the composition, another point that is quickly noticed is that Korean student like to tell their teachers that they have grasped the Uzbek language well.

An important point to be noted from the student’s composition is that of cultural differences and how Korean express themselves especially in observing their emotional and cognitive reactions.

2.2 Planning for teaching

Planning is one of the basic pedagogical competencies and an essential requirement of a second language teacher, especially forward planning (Stern 1996). Stern further states that planning includes

teacher's professional knowledge, an analysis of the content areas to be taught setting educational objectives, designing instructional procedures, identifying and developing learning resources and learning activities. Stern agrees that planning involves drawing schemes of work from the subject syllabus and lesson plans as well as preparation for in-class and out of class activities and learning resources related to language learning.

The syllabus according to Wilkins (1981) gives a summary of the content to be taught and also contains the long term objectives of teaching that subject. Another definition of a language teaching syllabus is the one presented by Mohsen (2008) who states that there are various types of syllabuses but the actual language teaching syllabus is an integration of two or more types. In his paper he discusses the types of syllabuses that are relevant for language teaching/learning competence. These are skill-based syllabi, which emphasize on the skills people must be able to do to be competent in a language and task-based syllabus that supports using tasks and activities to encourage learners to utilize the language communicatively. Most of them, however, agree that a syllabus is what is to be taught or learnt and how to teach it.

2.3 Methods of teaching language

A language teaching method is explained by Yalden (1987) as a plan for presenting the language materials to be learned and should be based upon an approach. In order to translate an approach into a method an instructional system, must be designed, considering the objectives of the teaching/ learning, selection of the content and organization of the types of tasks to be performed and the roles of the students and the teachers. Richards and Rogers (1986) on the other hand define a method as a way of teaching a language which is based on systematic principles and procedures.

Yalden (1987) further states that over the years teachers of language have witnessed a multiple of methods based on a variety of approaches. Some of these methods, for example, Direct method, Grammar Translation method, Audio-lingual method, the Audio-visual structuro-Global methods are well known names in the history of language teaching. Yalden, however, states that research carried out in the 1960's and 1970's on the use of these methods by Scheper and Wertheimer (1964) and Smith (1970) indicated that the results obtained by teachers as well as learners were not satisfactory. This is because it was observed that students could produce sentences in a lesson but could not use them appropriately when genuinely communicating outside of the classroom. This therefore indicated that students may know the rules of linguistic usage but be unable to use the language.

In developing communicative competence, Suciú and Mata (2013) have stated that basic pedagogical competencies which are internationally, recognized, conduct student centered teaching process. They further suggest that for communicative learner centered instructions the teacher has to provide appropriate input. This is when the teacher exposes the students to teacher talk, listening activities, reading passages and the language heard and read outside of class. Input gives learners the materials they need to develop their ability to use language on their own. The teacher's task therefore is to present content and learning activities that provide opportunities for learners to practice these skills for interpersonal language use in both formal and informal situations.

The traditional approach is based on the assumption that the creative aspects of the writing process cannot be taught and are limited to the conventions and mechanics of discourse. It only includes the teaching of grammar and the correct choice of vocabulary. In this approach students see writing as tedious and a burden since they are not given any direction. They are also not interested in what they write because they are not consulted in the choice of the topic and the audience. The teacher does not take time to find out whether they are familiar with the topic or not. Lastly there is delayed feedback.

The modern approach is also referred to as the process-oriented approach to writing. It combines communicative approach and the process approach and is based on the assumptions that; people write to communicate to readers and to accomplish specific purposes.

2.4 Instructional Resources

Suciú and Mata (2011) in their definition of pedagogical competence, state that it is the ability to use tangible resources which are instructional materials such as books, articles and technology such as software and hardware and also intangible resources, such as knowledge skills and experience to achieve

efficiency and or effectiveness in pedagogy. Planning for teaching and learning resources is an important component in the schemes of work and also in the lesson plan Stern (1996). This is because when resources are planned before hand it provides the teacher with sufficient time to acquire them before the teaching time.

Farrant, (2004) and Gowers, Philips and Walters (1995) agree that use of teaching/learning resources make a lesson more interesting and effective. They further state that, though schools vary in the number and types of resources available to the teachers, there are many ways that teachers can make the required resources available. Some of the resources a language teacher can use according to Farrant (2004) and Gowers and Philips (1995) are like: - chalkboard, over head projector, wall charts, pictures, maps, models, real objects, immediate environment, and artifacts. Other important resources are also like published materials such as course books, reference books, and other print materials like newspapers, journals and magazines. Language teachers can also make use of cassette recorders, radio, video, films, photo copier and computers. Even if schools will not have most of these resources, almost all schools will have some form of chalkboards which as Farrant (2004) and Gower and Philips (1995) state, is the most common and useful teaching resource. In order to obtain the maximum effect of chalkboard and any other teaching resource, in teaching and learning, the teacher has to organize well on how to use it while presenting the content.

2.5 Classroom management

According to Suciu and Mata (2011) teaching involves classroom management which is the ability to manage the teaching learning process by considering optimum use of space and time factors, as well as managing the learners. Everton and Weinstein (2006), drawings on the work of a number of educational theorists define classroom management as, “the actions teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social-emotional learning.

One of an integral part of classroom management according to Bull (1987) is the arrangement of the classroom. They both agree that a second language classroom, has to be made an effective learning environment by ensuring that appropriate learning resources are available and learners participate actively in learning. On the other hand Everton and Weinstein (2006) consider the aspect of physical classroom, that is, space in relation to capacity of students. They suggest that, since the main consideration in the language classroom is to provide opportunity for active participation and interaction, so as to develop students’ communicative competence, the class should be of medium size with a capacity of 45 students. Students’ active interaction in class is also facilitated by the way the teacher organizes the students seating arrangement and the teacher’s teaching methods which will also imply different classroom arrangement such as:-whole class teaching, group work or individual learning.

Apart from the physical environment the social environment is also very important in classroom management. According to Bull (1987) social environment involves the social context in which students’ behaviours take place. Manus (1989) states that in managing this social group which is the students, the teacher is the leader and his or her personal qualities as well as his/her technical skills are very vital. Bull (1987) further outlines general teacher qualities which stress that the teacher has to

establish himself or herself as a leader right from the beginning of a lesson to the end. This requires the teacher to ensure that the classroom is properly arranged and he/she has control over all the activities of different groups of students. It also means that the teaching /learning sessions progress smoothly and efficiently.

Focusing on classroom management, Weinstein, Tomlison, and Curran (2004) advocate that the role of the instructor in a language classroom is to create an environment in which the desire to communicate abounds – since language is about communication. They suggested that the instructor should have knowledge of students as individuals create a norm of sharing and group work, while defining for students areas where they are expected to work on their own. Furthermore, the instructor has to move around to check on what the students are doing, encourage students to talk in low voices as they share their creative ideas to enrich one another. In the course of classroom activities, the instructor should allow students to mentor peers with language problems.

2.6 Designing and assessing learners' writing skill

In teaching language, Suci and Mata (2011) state that teachers often have to measure students' language abilities by use of tests, quizzes or through other informal methods. Since the aim of second language teaching is to develop communicative competence, the type of assessment methods for this, should focus on how the learner can speak and write the target language through tasks that require performance of language. According to Alderson (1995) test constructors need test specifications when designing a test. These are clear statements about who the test is aimed at, what its purpose is what content is to be covered, what methods are to be used for assessing, what language elements should be tested and how long the test will take.

In addition, Brown (2007) names five principles that serve as guidelines for the design of a good test or assessment. These principles are practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity and washback. A good test is practical if it is within the means of financial limitations, time constraints ease of administration and scoring and interpretation. Reliability refers to a test being consistent and dependable. That means if the test is administered more than once under similar conditions it will produce similar results. Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. Authenticity is how a language task is likely to enact in the real world or how the language test is as natural as possible. Washback means the effects of an assessment on teaching and learning prior to the assessment itself. When students take a test, the feedback they receive about their competence should “wash back” to them in the form of useful diagnoses of strengths and weaknesses.

The assessment of writing is complicated (Alderson 1995; Brown 2007) especially in a process-oriented approach. Brown states that in this process the teacher is a guide and facilitator of students' performance in the ongoing process of developing the written work.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this paper will be based on Gerlarch and Ely model of Instructional System developed in 1971 and described by Gerlarch and Ely (1980). This model provides an elaborate instructional system with the following components of teaching. These components are:

- Specification of the objectives. Objectives give direction of what the learners should be able to do at certain points along the instructional continuum and also direction in the selection of what should be taught.
- Selection of content. The content selected is to help the learner to attain the instructional objectives. The Uzbek syllabus has outlined various topics for the writing skills where composition writing is one of the main sections where there are five different types of compositions.
- Entering behavior. This is the knowledge level of students in that particular course. This is established by the teacher giving a pre-test, so as to test the general achievement of a class before starting a course.
- Instructional strategy and techniques. A strategy is the way content is presented in the instructional environment, taking into consideration of the learner's entry level and the instructional objectives set by the teacher. Technique or method is the specific way of presenting content.
- Organizing students into groups. This depends on the objectives to be achieved; some require individualized instruction, small groups or large groups.
- Time allocation. Use of time depends on the subject matter to be covered, objectives to be achieved and learning activities planned. Time allocation is also controlled by the school time table, for example in secondary schools each period lasts for 40 minutes. According to Brown (2007) process- oriented approach to writing is interactive and learner-centered so it requires sufficient time for the students to initiate activity and exchange ideas as they prepare for the actual writing.
- Allocation of learning space. The classroom space can be arranged differently for different purposes. Since the process-oriented approach, which will be used for this study, requires students to be in small groups the class room space will therefore be designed for such groups.
- Selection of learning resources. These are chosen in relation to the content to be taught and the instructional objectives to be achieved. In the process-oriented approach to writing Brown (2007) states that writing being a composing process, students need multiple drafts before a final effective product is created. He also states that in this approach the students have to connect reading and writing. The implication of this in terms of resources is that; students need writing materials and a variety of relevant text books as reading resources. Use of resources like real objects, films and other audio-visual resources that stimulate generation of ideas for writing would be necessary also.
- Evaluation of performance. This is the point at which the assessment of the behavior stated in the objectives is done. In teaching Uzbek composition writing skills, formative and summative evaluation is used. However since in the process-oriented approach to writing, the teacher

assessment should serve the purpose of facilitating improvement of a student's written work the final judgment which is summative evaluation, will be based on holistic, analytic and primary trait scales.

- Analysis of feedback. This is the response we get from others on whether what we do realizes the objectives corresponding to the terminal behavior. According to Brown (2007) in the process-oriented approach to writing, a student gives feedback to fellow students and is also given feedback by them during the peer editing process, which he/she uses to improve his /her writing. The final writing submitted to the teacher is also returned with teacher's feedback. The student needs to spend time examining the comments from the teacher and compare with those from the class-mates to see whether there was any improvement.

These ten components of the System Model form the backbone of any instructional process for teaching any aspect in any subject. Effectiveness of teaching and learning according to Gerlarch and Ely's model (1980) is facilitated by teachers' pedagogical competencies for example, planning for teaching, teaching strategies or methods, use of learning resources, classroom management and assessment of learners' performance. The results obtained are a reflection of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The purpose of this study is to establish how teachers' pedagogical competencies, which are also derived from the Model, influence students' performance in Kiswahili composition writing skills. Below is an illustration of the interaction of the independent variables which are the teachers' pedagogical competencies and the dependable variable which is the learners' performance in Uzbek composition writing skills. Both the independent and dependent variables are likely to be affected by certain intervening variables that might interfere with the effectiveness of the independent variables.

Conclusion

The purpose of the paper was to investigate the influence of teachers' pedagogical competencies on students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korea. The specific objectives of the paper were to:- establish whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in planning for teaching influences students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korean Universities, to determine whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in teaching methods influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills in Korea's Universities, to examine whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in use of learning resources influences students' performance in Uzbek writing skills, to establish whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in classroom management styles influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills and to determine whether teachers' pedagogical competencies in design and assessment techniques influence students' performance in Uzbek writing skills.

This paper was guided by Gerlarch and Ely model of Instructional System developed in 1971 and described by Gerlarch and Ely (1980). This model provides an elaborate instructional system with various components of teaching. These components of the System Model form the backbone of any instructional process for teaching any subject.

The study concludes that there is a positive relationship between teachers' level of education and the students' performance in Uzbek composition writing skills.

The study further found that that the higher the teachers experience, the higher the performance of the students in writing skills. There is a statistically significant relationship between duration of service and students' performance in Uzbek composition writing skills. The paper also concludes that there is a significant relationship between planning to teach Uzbek on students' composition writing skills performance. Use of schemes of work, Uzbek syllabus, use of lesson plan has a significant relationship on the students' performance on Uzbek composition writing skills. The paper also concludes that a frequent lesson on writing Uzbek composition have a positive impact on performance as indicated by both teachers and students.

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